

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:*Sub A 7*

1. A method of obtaining product information regarding a product, comprising the steps of:

- 5 disposing a first computer of a user on a network,
connecting an input device to the first computer to provide a user interface to the first computer, wherein the input device can sense indicia of the product, the indicia containing a product ID, and the input device has positional sensing capabilities and can scan optical indicia;
- 10 accessing a second computer disposed on the network in response to the user sensing the indicia of the product with the input device;
performing a lookup operation at the second computer to match the product ID with routing information of a vendor server disposed on the network, the vendor server having the product information of the product;
- 15 returning the routing information from the second computer to the first computer in order to access the vendor server; and
accessing the vendor server in accordance with the routing information to return the product information to the first computer for presentation to the user.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of accessing the vendor server includes accessing a distributor node of the input device, an advertiser node, and an E-commerce node.

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3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the input device can sense information stored in magnetic medium.

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4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of accessing the vendor server further comprises the steps of,
- 5 returning the product information of the product from an advertiser node, distributor information of a distributor of the input device from a distributor node, and E-commerce information from an E-commerce node, and
- framing the distributor information, product information, and E-commerce information in a browser window of the first computer for presentation to the user.

5. The method of Claim 1, wherein in response to receiving scanned indicia data from the input device, a software interface running on the first computer converts the received indicia data and generates the routing information for transmission to the second computer.

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6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the routing information includes an input device ID and a network address of the second computer.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the user enables reading of the indicia, in the step of connecting, by first depressing one or more buttons on the input device.

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8. The method of Claim 1, wherein a software interface running on the first computer is operable to automatically detect reading of the product indicia by the input device.

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9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the input device and a software interface running on the first computer perform a handshake operation using a unique

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Sub B⁷ input device ID stored in the input device prior to enabling operation of one or more operating modes of the input device.

Sub A⁹ 10. An architecture for obtaining product information of a product, comprising:

- a first computer of a user disposed on a network,
- an input device connected to said first computer to provide a user interface to said first computer, wherein said input device can sense indicia of the product, said indicia containing a product ID, and said input device having positional sensing capabilities and is operable to scan optical indicia;
- a second computer disposed on said network and accessed in response to said user sensing said indicia of the product with said input device;
- wherein a lookup operation is performed at said second computer to match said product ID with routing information of a vendor server disposed on said network, said vendor server having the product information of the product;
- wherein said routing information is returned from said second computer to said first computer in order to access said vendor server;
- wherein said vendor server is accessed in accordance with said routing information to return the product information to said first computer for presentation to said user.

11. The architecture of Claim 10, wherein said vendor server is operable to access a distributor node of the input device, an advertiser node, and an E-commerce node.

Sub B⁷ 12. The architecture of Claim 10, wherein said input device can sense information stored in magnetic medium.

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13. The architecture of Claim 10, wherein said vendor server returns the product information of the product from an advertiser node, distributor information of a distributor of said input device from a distributor node, and E-commerce information from an E-commerce node, and said distributor information, the product information, and said E-commerce information is framed in a browser window of said first computer for presentation to said user.

14. The architecture of Claim 10, wherein a software interface running on said first computer converts received indicia data and generates said routing information for transmission to said second computer, in response to receiving said scanned indicia data from said input device.

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15. The architecture of Claim 10, wherein said routing information includes an input device ID and a network address of said second computer.

16. The architecture of Claim 10, wherein said user enables reading of said indicia by first depressing one or more buttons on said input device.

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17. The architecture of Claim 10, wherein a software interface running on said first computer is operable to automatically detect reading of said product indicia by said input device.

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18. The architecture of Claim 10, wherein said input device and a software interface running on said first computer perform a handshake operation using a unique input device ID stored in said input device prior to enabling operation of one or more operating modes of said input device.

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19. A method for connecting two locations on a network utilizing a pointing device at the first location interconnected to a user's computer at the first location, comprising the steps of:
- providing both positional and optical scanning capabilities in the pointing device;
 - scanning the pointing device with the optical scanning capability thereof over an encoded optical code, encoded with information representative of a location on the network of the second location, while operating a first program on the user computer which utilizes the positional capabilities of the pointing device;
 - running a second program in the user's computer;
 - detecting with the second program the scanning of the encoded optical code;
 - connecting the first location to the second location over the network through a routing location indicated by the information encoded in encoded optical codes in response to the step of detecting the encoded optical code; and
 - receiving information from the second location transmitted therefrom to the first location.

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20. The method of Claim 19, wherein the encoded optical code is a barcode.
21. The method of Claim 19, wherein the encoded optical code is an ISBN code.
22. The method of Claim 19, wherein the encoded optical code is an EAN code.

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23. The method of Claim 19, wherein the encoded optical code is disposed on a flat surface.

24. The method of Claim 19, wherein the encoded optical code is disposed on a product.

25. The method of Claim 19, wherein the encoded optical code is encoded with information regarding the product and associated with a product.

26. The method of Claim 19, wherein the step of receiving information comprises displaying the information received from the second location when received therefrom.

27. The method of Claim 19, wherein the step of connecting includes the step of watching a web browser program which is operable to interface with the network.

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28. The method of Claim 19, wherein the step of connecting comprises:
assembling a packet of data with the information extracted from the encoded optical code contained therein;

transferring the assembled packet to an intermediate network location remote from the first location;

providing at the intermediate location a database having contained therein a plurality of routing addresses on the network and corresponding encoded optical information;

comparing the information disposed in the received packet at the intermediate location with information in the database to determine if there is a

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corresponding routing address disposed therein corresponding with the encoded optical information;

if a match exists, then returning the matching information in the form of the routing address to the first location; and

connecting the first location to the second location in accordance with the network address information returned thereto from the intermediate location.

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